Tisbury School Committee
4:00PM, Tuesday, March 10, 2026
Tisbury School Cafeteria

TSC Members Present: Chair Amy Houghton, Jen Cutrer, Alecia Lesnikowska,
Staff: Superintendent Richard Smith, John Custer – Principal,
Asst. Principal Melissa Ogden, Kate Harding,
Student Support Director Hope MacLeod,
Others: Edward Pachico,
Marni Lipke – Recorder

* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC members

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was called to order at 4:06PM.
(Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. JEN CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. ALECIA LESNIKOWSKA THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 17, 2026 MEETING WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED; 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

III. Superintendent's Report

• (The MVRHS Principal search had narrowed to 2 candidates Bryan Lombardi from Stoneham and David Mahoney from Winchester. The candidates would visit the Island and meet with staff and MVRHSC members, before a final decision on March 19th.

A. All Island School Committee (AISC) (See below: Meetings/Events.)

The upcoming agenda would include:
- short local school committee meetings to re-certify budgets after the health insurance rate determination, and
- the report on regionalization.

VI. Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Building Project Update

A. Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Reimbursement

• MSBA reimbursement came in at $71,774,000 on a $333,500,000 project.
• The MVRHSC voted 6 to 2 for 30 year level debt, in favor of: consistent payment level, not imposing high payments in the first 4 years, and paying all interest up front.
- The Tisbury MVRSC representatives advocated and voted for level principal debt which would have saved the Island $47,000,000 in interest of which Tisbury's share was $11,000,000. The matter would now be discussed by the Tisbury Select Board (TSB) since Tisbury residents were paying about 3 times that of other Island residents.
- Surprisingly the Oak Bluffs Finance Committee Chair, in opposition to the Town Administrator, advocated for level debt stating that $47,000,000 would not be much money in 30 years.

B. June 2nd Vote (See below: Actions.)

It was now time to work hard to inform the public for the June 2nd Islandwide vote.
- Absentee ballot protocol was not yet known, although there would be no early voting.
- Ms. Lesinkowska confirmed her offer to host an informational coffee gathering.

III. Tisbury School Building Project Report (See documents on file.)

B. Project Update

• Although all solar materials were now on site the weather was still a factor in transporting work crews and work scheduling.
- The parking lot canopy work was still on schedule for April 13th spring break. The school community had been email that the lot would be unavailable April 11th – 26th as well as for all of July and August.
• The contractor that would fix the remaining few leaks was scheduled for the end of March. Electricians fixed lights.

A. Approval of Project Invoices

Sweetwater costs were for audio-visual and music equipment.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. LESNIKOWSKA THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) THE FOLLOWING FEBRUARY 1 THROUGH 28, 2026 INVOICES TOTALING $7,807.58 TO BE SENT TO TOWN HALL FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT:
- CHA INVOICE # 39235-59 FOR $5,500.00,
- SWEETWATER INVOICE # 44462370 FOR $2,307.58.

II. Financial Report

B. Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) School Budget

1. Finance and Advisory Committee Feedback

The FinCom seemed appreciative of the lower FY27 budget increase.

A. Fund Balances (See documents on file.) - No concerns

Both Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) Business Manager Mark Friedman and Tisbury School Financial Administrative Support Professional (ASP) Rachel Hickey anticipated a FY26 budget deficit of ~ $40,000 from unforeseen electric overages. Two areas of possible draws were School Choice and shifting some cafeteria worker salaries into the Revolving Lunch fund.

C. Grants – Nothing to report

V. Principal's Report

A. School Events (See documents on file & below: Meetings/Events.)

• The revitalized Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) had copied Oak Bluffs and Edgartown PTO fundraising ideas for a Bingo Night and a Portuguese American (PA) Club silent auction with music and fun. The PTO was also sponsoring this month's Movie Night at the Martha's Vineyard Museum.
• MCAS testing would start March 24th.
• After the success of *James and the Giant Peach* (see 11/18/25 Minutes p.2) the eighth graders decided to put on a free play in the gym with the help of some committed staff.
• The Student Council was looking forward to presenting at the TSC May 12th meeting (see 2/17/26 Minutes p.3 # V A).

B. School Choice Vote for 2026-7 School Year

School Choice protocol was explained to Ms. Lesnikowska. Some students had to be turned down for lack of available slots, much to their dismay.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. LESNIKOWSKA THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) ACCEPTING THE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTION FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR.

• Statistics from various sources (registration, School Choice requests, Shared Services, Early Childhood) estimated the incoming kindergarten (K) enrollment at ~ 40 children, the highest it's been in 15 years. Since 18 was large for a K class, Administration was considering 3 sections. (The graduating 8th grade class was 21 students.)

- Kindergarten teacher Kate Harding reported things were going great with this year's 27 student cohort and everyone still appreciated the new building.

III. Superintendent's Report

B. Shared Services Update

• Kindergarten enrollment was not consistent across the MVPS but there seemed to be no K enrollment in the Compass Program.

• A half district-lead, half teacher-choice Professional Development (PD) day was scheduled.

• Talented MVPS Shared Services Coordinator Shane Schofield resigned as of May 1st as the off-Island commute was becoming untenable. The position was being advertised as a Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA) with a Masters Degree in severe Special Education (SpEd). The successful candidate could start work July 1st or immediately if available. Collaborative administrative duties included the Extended School Year (ESY) summer program.

• Chair Amy Houghton expanded on the Medicare Rural Health Transformation Grant (see 2/17/26 Minutes p.3 #V B) for healthcare and behavioral health related support, (e.g. substance issues workforce health, etc.). A community group (Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH), Adult Community Education (ACE), etc.) was working on the application which might include a community college on the Island and/or redesigning spaces, technology, digital learning, healthier community and youth anxiety, depression and substance issues.

• Thanks went to Amy Lilavois for workshops teaching parents, pediatricians, students and clinicians the dangers of pornography.

Adjournment

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. LESNIKOWSKA THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) AT 4:47PM.

continued >

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:
- **TSC – 4:00PM, Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at the Tisbury School**
- **TSC – 4:00PM, Tuesdays, May 12, 2026 June TBD**
- ATM/STM – 7:00PM, Tuesday, April 28, 2026 – Tis. School Gym
- Town Election – 12:00N-8:00PM, Tuesday, May 12, 2026
- MVRHS Vote – 11:00AM-7:00PM, Tuesday, June 2, 2026

Appendix B: Actions
- Ms. Houghton – ask about absentee ballots for MVRHS Project 6/2/26 vote.
- Ms. Lesnikowska – contact Ms. Houghton re: MVRHS Project coffee gathering.

Appendix C: Documents on File:
- TSC Agenda 3/10/26
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year, 2025-2026 2/13/26
- Tisbury School Events
- Tisbury School Budget Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (4 p.) 3/6/26
- Anjo email re: Tisbury School WTR Project Updates 3/10/26
- Tisbury School Addition and Renovations Project Invoice Summary Sheet, For Period: February 01, 2026 – February 28, 2026 (3 p.)
- Tiger Tales March 2026 (6 p.)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

_____ _____
Marni Lipke – Recorder Date

_____ _____
Amy Houghton – TSC Chair Date

Minutes approved 4/14/26